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THE PREDOMINANCE OF OPTIMISM.

Reporters for The Times recorded faithfully yesterday the views of a large number of men of affairs in this city as to the future outlook of the city, state and nation. It may be noted that optimism predominated throughout all their statements.

In other words the men of affairs in Oklahoma City are very much encouraged. They are confident that the future will bring additional business and they are starting the new year with renewed energy. It means that these men have confidence in the city and state in which they live, and that is all that is necessary.

There is every reason for the encouragement shown by these citizens. They are all prosperous and it is easy to see that there is even greater prosperity in store for them. The city is growing steadily and greater things are in prospect.

From the statements made by the business men it is learned that Oklahoma City is in far better condition than almost any other city in the United States. The amount of business transacted shows this and the steady increase of the bank clearings clinches the argument. The business men all pointed to substantial increases in their lines during the past year, and that has been a time when there was general complaint all over the country.

Another pleasing feature of this prosperity is the fact that The Times is also sharing in it and as the best newspaper in Oklahoma City expects to share still more. This newspaper is glad to record the prosperity of any man in Oklahoma City, whether he is an advertiser or not, for its greatest aim is to see the whole city prosper.

IS JOFFE THE GREAT WAR GENIUS?

There have been predictions that the present European war would bring out another great military genius, and indeed it would be strange if it did not, but until recently there has been no indication as to the man upon whom the mantle would fall.

At present some of the German army officers are said to be declaring that General Joffre is a second Moltke and far superior to every commander in the Kaiser's service except General von Hindenburg, the genius who has kept the Russians busy during the past few months.

When Joffre was chosen head of the French army he was known principally as an engineer officer who had seen much service in the colonies, but who had never commanded large forces in the annual maneuvers. His Fabian tactics at a time when the Germans were overrunning northern France like a torrent undoubtedly saved the nation from a disaster.

There was no danger of Paris being occupied after the British came to the support of the French. Von Kluck turned about just in time to escape being drawn into a trap. At all times Joffre has been cool and resourceful. There is nothing about him suggesting the dashing officer. He works out his plan of campaign with the same precision that he would work out a mathematical problem.

While he has been deliberate in his movements against the Germans, the fact that he is making progress day by day is sufficient to show that he is working along lines designed to enable the French eventually to clear France and Belgium from the invader. In the event of evacuation being accomplished, Germany will have reason to fear the entry of the enemy on her eastern and western territory.

WORK OF THE BOYS' CORN CLUBS.

The general education board has a very wide range of activity. In its latest report it speaks with enthusiasm of what it called the boys' corn club movement. The general board sought at one time to reach adult farmers and did its best to accomplish something by direct appeal, but it soon found that the man long in the business was nearly hopeless in the sections of the country in which the board was at work.

So a flank movement was undertaken and the result of having first class men in agriculture was sought to be attained by educating the boys and girls. The boys were persuaded to organize corn clubs, the girls to undertake vegetable gardening for out of door interests.

The latest report is devoted to the corn clubs, leaving the girls' clubs for later treatment, but the showing is something wonderful with respect to what boys have done in the southern states where the opportunity has been occupied.

Prizes awarded for the yield on the boys' acre showed an increase of from seventeen bushels to sixty-two in Alabama, an increase from twenty-two to forty-nine in Arkansas, an increase from eight

bushels to the acre to thirty-eight in Florida. The Georgia crop was four times the average yield on like lands. Louisiana shows nearly three times an increase, Mississippi nearly four times. Oklahoma much more than doubled the yield of neighboring lands.

It is impossible to praise too highly such work as results in a large increase of food supplies in this country without corresponding increase of freight or of outlay in production. The mixture, as the painter said, of brains with raw material is producing magnificent results in agriculture.

A GOOD TIME TO BRANCH OUT NOW.

Caution is the sentiment prevailing in business circles. There is hope, based naturally upon great orders from abroad, but those orders do not extend through the entire range of business and do not affect more than a fair percentage of the various industries. Some of the bankers in New York, sending out their weekly reviews, urge that it is fair to ask if the caution is not going beyond reason and reaching a stage where it must react.

That is the way Henry Clews sizes up conditions at the present time, and there are many other financiers who are beginning to think that the country has been over-cautious. This action has resulted in causing the depression, to a great extent.

But there are many who think that now is the right time to reach out into new ventures. There are many investments now that are just as safe as they have ever been and fully as safe as they will ever be in the future. Many lines of business are offering new inducements for investors.

In the course of time, whether the European war ends or if it continues, there must be new adjustments. If the man who can see reasonably well how things are going gets in on the ground floor he will be ready for the rush when it comes. There is no doubt about opportunities being offered right at this time. There should be caution, it is true, but the man who does not show too much of it is the one who will stand the best chance of winning and he will also help to bring prosperity back to the country.

A MYSTERIOUS DIPLOMAT TALKS.

The story that comes is dated from London and is said to have come by way of Geneva from Vienna. It may be received with mental reservations as to its accuracy and the mysterious diplomat who has talked may be of the E. Phillips Oppenheim variety, but nevertheless it is interesting.

According to the report the mysterious diplomat in Vienna made the statement that Germany had tricked Austria into the war and that now the time is ripe for making peace. It is said that this diplomat was a member of the government until the breaking out of the war, but is not now connected with the government in any capacity. Therefore it is doubtful if he speaks with authority. And as his name is not given and as his identity is thereby concealed it is impossible to appraise the value of the utterance. He and his story may be a mere figment of someone's imagination.

As to Germany tricking Austria into war, persons who have been reading the news right along hardly can have forgotten that it was Austria's determination to ride roughshod over Serbia that produced the situation which resulted in the grand explosion. Germany is in the position of standing in shining armor beside her ally in that matter.

Whatever may have gone on under the surface the outer aspect shows Austria the original storm center and Germany adhering to the terms of the treaty which required the one nation to come to the defense of the other if attacked.

Does the mysterious Vienna diplomat or the person who invented him mean to insinuate that Germany worked the situation to have Austria start the trouble, fearing that if it were the other way around the Austrian statesmen would take the view of their treaty obligations later announced by Italy, the third member of the triple alliance, as its rule of faith and practice?

TROUBLE ON THE NORTHERN BORDER.

Border complications of the United States have extended so as to include the northern as well as the southern frontier of the country, and the shooting of two Americans by Canadian militia-men in the Niagara river is as troublesome an affair as anything has been that has taken place at Naco.

The Americans were shot down without adequate reason, as far as the available facts indicate. At the worst they were violators of Canadian game laws, possibly hunting ducks out of season, but capital punishment is not legally prescribed in Canada or any other civilized country for such a minor offense, and even if it were no law puts the power of summary execution in the hands of individuals.

Nor is martial law in force in the dominion. The courts are still open in Ontario and offenders against the country's statutes can be taken before them for trial and due punishment.

The shooting is simply inexcusable. No doubt it occurred because the nerves of some of our neighbors are overstrained by the alarming rumors of a contemplated invasion on the part of German-American residents, but to those of us who have watched the matter from this side those rumors have been so absurdly unfounded that one can have little patience with such an explanation.

There isn't the slightest evidence that German-Americans are considering an inroad on Canada, and fears of such a happening are utterly baseless. Carried to the extent they reached in the Niagara river incident, such fears react upon the people who allow themselves to be carried off their feet and are extremely apt as well to result in serious complications, unless the other nation involved maintains a high degree of self-control.

Governor Harrison of the Philippine Islands admits uprisings of the Filipinos. At first he attempted to produce the impression that all was well in his bailiwick, but evidently conditions became so much worse that he could not continue to do so. Those who have felt the Philippine Islanders were ready for self government should study the uprising of the best civilized tribes at a moment when independence seemed nearer to them than at any period since 1898.

Judge Ben Lindsey comes out of the pool of oblivion long enough to say that he regrets it because the Bureau of Municipal Research has been investigating his actions. In the stress of the war and Belgium's plight Judge Lindsey had sunk very deep into the pool.

PEANUTS IN THE ROASTER

A correspondent wants to know if newspaper work does not afford some pleasure, along with the hard labor that is connected with it.

It does, Horace, for every now and then the newspaper man is permitted to record the slight splash that is made when some one who deserves it goes head first into the pool.

And every now and then a style of dress worn by the women is put into the discard and the man who writes for the newspapers is permitted to record the fact and then smile in a way that satisfies his soul.

But the enthusiastic citizen who started the new year wrong and landed in front of a magistrate on account



of his enthusiasm should not be discouraged, for there are still three hundred and sixty-four days in which he can behave himself.

And this is not counting the nights in which he will have the opportunity to go home early and stay away from the bright lights.

It should be remembered also that the newspaper man derives himself of a great deal of enjoyment at times by not putting in the paper everything that he finds out.

But sooth as he may, Horace, he will never be able to find the woman who does not think she would have lived in a large brick house with garage and automobile attachments if she had married the other fellow.

Of course the chances are a thousand to one that she wouldn't, but that does not prevent her from dreaming that such things might have come true.

In giving advice to women recently a preacher told them to keep on fooling their husbands by making them



believe they were held in just the same high esteem that they were before they were married.

Far be it from us to offer any suggestions on this subject, but we fear this preacher is venturing upon a subject about which the married women know far more than he does.

The suppressed laughter that can be heard from some of those in the audience would seem to indicate as much, anyhow.

But we are still charitable enough to think that when General Sherman made that remark about war he had reference to the regular outdoor kind and not to the more frequent inter-nicotine strife.

Also if anybody intends to offer a reward for the apprehension of a peevish in this city there is not much danger that the money would ever have to be paid.

And the bank cashier who would permit a man dressed as a woman to take money away from him really ought to visit an oculist.

But the woman who tells her husband with brutal frankness that she is sorry she didn't marry the other fel-



low may be truthful and all that, but nobody will ever accuse her, after they have learned the fact, of being a tactician.

At the same time this is not saying that the husband may not be getting, when he is told about it, just what is coming to him.

Judging only by what we have seen of it, we think we are going to like the year 1915 very well.

Of course it is young yet and there is no way of knowing how it will turn out as it grows older.

References to newspaper men as made above, it should be understood, does not include those who wear tassels in their caps.

Nor to the journalists of the gutter-snipe variety whose ideas of grammar lead them to refer to "the stores who help."

But we'll see you, of course, at the banquet next week?

And laugh while you stifle?
RICHARD S. GRAVES.

Winston Churchill, Forty Years Old, Trying to Maintain the Traditions of British Navy



Winston Churchill, half an American, has just celebrated his fortieth birthday. On him as head of the admiralty has devolved the defense of the British empire in the greatest war the world has known. Churchill has so far escaped criticism for the part he has played in the management of the war, with the exception of the failure of the British to hold the Belgians successfully when Antwerp was under siege. But lately Lord Kitchener, in whose judgment the British people have unbounded confidence, has stated that the British action in the Belgian capital was an important strategic move which served its purpose.

MONEY AND MOVIES.

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"Of course he's marrying her for her money," came shrilly from behind the big rubber plant in the parlor of the paragon, where the semi-monthly social was being held. "Wouldn't you think she'd know that if she hadn't that \$5,000 which her father left her tucked away in bank Jim Maxwell would never have looked at her?"

"I'd think so!"

"Why, Elsie Barron is thirty-four. If she is a day, and getting fatter every week. Jim's twenty-six only. Good looking—and looking for money. He told my brother a month ago that if he could raise \$5,000 by any means he knew a spot to put it where it would treble every year. And the very next week Elsie went around with that cheap turquoise ring!"

"And that silly, glad smile!"

"Oh, she's been crazy about him since we all went to high school together. Is that my son walling? He shouldn't have brought him. He's such a nuisance. But his father objects

to his marrying her for her money."

"Well, I'd like to have my smoking jacket along and my old slippers," he continued, smiling.

"Bring them," she said carelessly. "And my trunk and neckties, too!"

"Has your landlady turned you out?" she laughed.

"May I bring them?" he persisted. "Surely," she laughed.

"All right. Three months from today," he asked. "And what stone do you want in the ring? I'm not rolling in dough, so you can't have a diamond."

"Oh," she said, still thinking that he really meant it. "I'd love a turquoise." She knew that wouldn't cost much.

The next night he brought it and he put it on her finger in an earnest way. Well, so she had worn a silly, glad smile. She raised her plump chin haughtily now. What if she had? She wasn't the only one in town who appreciated him. Even Nell looked at him with a genial glance that she gave to few of the unattached men.

But Nell hadn't a penny to her name except the \$9 a week she earned in old Gray's general store.

Jim strolled in then. "Hello, Elsie!" he greeted. "I stopped for you. Been having a good time?" The voice was pleasant, but too suave. At another time Elsie would have gazed in understanding of that amused suavity. Jim did not think that church societies were places of mirth and recreation. His gray eyes went quickly over the groups of women, in best clothes and friendly smiles, hanging so he whispered, cake and gossip around with equal zeal.

But tonight Elsie didn't smile. She looked at him soberly. Then her eyes went across the room to a mirror, which threw back her short, plump figure. The same mirror reflected Jim as young and lithe and handsome. Elsie sighed.

"Sure," he whispered. "That's the way it affects me. Let's beat it!"

She was willing. But she was so unattractive on the way that Jim frowned and said goodnight at the gate, pleading an appointment with Tom Wilson, Jim's brother. Business, he explained carelessly. "Got to be a business man if I take the load of matrimony," he further joked, and swung off.

"I'll see," Elsie said to herself. "I will see." And what she meant by seeing she proved the next day. She went down to the bank and drew out her \$5,000. Straight across the street she walked to another bank and informed the cashier that she wanted to lend it. First mortgage, second, anything he recommended as safe. He took it hastily. "I've got a place to drop it," he said pleasantly. He was a friend of her mother's. "And you'll get good interest."

That night Elsie said carelessly to Jim as he lounged in the Morris chair. "Did I tell you, Jim, that my \$5,000 is no longer in the bank?"

"I'd like to be here every night, old girl," he had lazily observed, looking around the small, green-walled living room. Then he just as lazily lit his pipe.

"No one said you couldn't," Elsie had laughed. She was picking up threads from the floor that her mother had dropped while sewing earlier in the evening.

"Well, I'd like to have my smoking jacket along and my old slippers," he continued, smiling.

"Bring them," she said carelessly. "And my trunk and neckties, too!"

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"No," he replied, "you didn't. Gee whizz! I'm sorry, I was just going to ask you to borrow it." There was real discomfiture in his voice.

Elsie felt her heart go down to her shoes. She went on. "And I guess I've let it go—if the security is as good, the mortgage is no good?" she asked with a creditable assumption of alacrity and ignorance.

"You've about said it up," he retorted. "So you're lost!"

It was not all acting that laid the grievous look on Elsie's plump face. She had lost something more precious than the money which she was pretending to have lost.

"Well," said Jim abstractedly. "It's too bad." And then, though it was only 9:15, he rose to go. Another engagement with Tom. He kissed her mechanically as he left her. She wiped the spot on her cheek. She listened to his quick decided footsteps as he turned the corner. Then she went to bed and cried. "I wish I'd never found it out! I don't care. I wish I'd not tried to be sure. I wish I didn't know."

She did not see him for three evenings. He telephoned that he was busy. The old cashier telephoned that the money was loaned. He would send some papers up for her signature in a few days. Elsie sat at home and tried to pretend that she was glad that she had learned in time. And when Jim finally dropped in she stayed in her room and sent down word that she had a headache. Once before she had had a headache, and he had sent up a bunch of carnations. She expected him the next day, and by the next evening she was in a whirlwind of wrath at herself for that foolish little expectation. For he sent nothing but a polite telephone message.

Two evenings passed before he came again. Elsie sat quietly in the living room while he swung in, threw his hat upon a stand, tossed a box of candy to her, and dropped into the Morris chair with a sigh. "Gee! I've done some lusting!" he explained. "Never knew I could lust so fast. How's the head?" he asked solicitously.

In spite of herself Elsie's heart beat fast. The color flushed into her face. Even if he were marrying her for her money she almost felt that she preferred that to his not marrying her at all. And then she berated herself as a silly woman. A silly old woman. No girl would have so little pride.

"It rather stumped me that you lost that money," he exclaimed care-

lessly. "You see I knew you'd just as soon let me have it as not, and I rather counted on putting it into a lease. But—" he beamed at her. "It's all right now. I borrowed \$3,000 from the other bank. Some party just happened to leave it there to be loaned. So now Tom and I have got that moving picture theater in our own name. We got stuck for a big price, but it's worth it. It's a money maker. And now, old girl, we'll get married right this week before the movies quit being a drawing card and I lose so much money. I won't have the nerve to ask you. This is Thursday—"

"Not Friday," Elsie said. "That's Thursday."

"That's bad luck. And so is Saturday. And not Sunday."

"Then next Tuesday," Jim said firmly.

Elsie looked at him with shining eyes. "I'd like," she observed, irreverently, "to tell some women something."

SIDE LIGHTS ON WAR NEWS.

Jews are in all the armies, and they are proving themselves to be among the bravest fighters. There are now over 5,000 Jews in the British army. The casualty lists disclose wounded Jewish soldiers in many of the regiments at the front.

Servia's army is in rags, unwashed, unshaven and barefoot. The supply department is no longer able to meet the demands upon it, and in consequence the troops are suffering the greatest hardships. The Servian army has been fighting for three years.

Russian tolerance toward prisoners of war is astonishingly illustrated at Kholm, where a number of Austrians interned there have been permitted to leave a cinema theater, while another group of prisoners have formed a band which plays Czech airs in the streets.

In Paris, as in all the European capitals, there are thousands of hungry men, women and children, and soup kitchens have been extended all over the city, and now more than 10,000 persons, representing as many families, are served daily at an optional cost of 2 cents.

England's tallest soldier, Private H. Barker of the Grenadier Guards, has been wounded while fighting at the front. When taken to the hospital it was found that there was no cot in the wards long enough to accommodate Barker's 6 feet 10 inches. Consequently the foot had to be knocked off one of the beds.

England and German alone have already borrowed almost \$3,000,000,000 for the war. Statements by these governments and by the French government indicate that the five big belligerents must be spending around \$25,000,000 a day, or at the rate of about \$9,000,000,000 a year. There remains Belgium, Servia, Japan and Turkey. We may pretty safely say that the direct expenditure is not less than \$1,000,000,000 a month.

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